

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, in this application.

Claims 1-2 (canceled)

3. (previously presented) A method of screening for a compound that inhibits the binding between a human Toll-like receptor 3 and a protein comprised of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 or the amino acid sequence from position 394 to position 532 of SEQ ID NO:2, the method comprising

contacting a candidate compound with a cell transfected with a DNA molecule encoding said protein, wherein said cell naturally expresses human Toll-like receptor 3; and

measuring whether said compound inhibits the binding between said protein and human Toll-like receptor 3.

Claims 4-32 (canceled)

33. (previously presented) An isolated protein comprised of the amino acid sequence from position 394 to position 532 of SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein proline at position 434 is replaced with histidine, wherein said protein specifically binds to a human Toll-like receptor 3 but fails to induce interferon β production.

34. (previously presented) An isolated DNA molecule encoding the protein as set forth in Claim 33.

35. (previously presented) A recombinant expression vector having a DNA molecule as set forth in Claim 34.

36. (previously presented) An isolated host cell transformed with a recombinant expression vector as set forth in Claim 35.

Claim 37 (canceled)